

#### REPORT FROM

##### JENNY GARDHAM:

Jenny, who was on the island last Fall, was kind enough to report on, and take photos of, some new developments. The accompanying photo clearly shows a new sidewalk being constructed on the west side of Atamu Tekena, just south of the *farmacia*. She also visited the Explora Hotel and reported on some of its architectural details, which include slate walls in the bathrooms and a bidet there as well. We swear we're not making this up ... a bidet on Easter Island. She also took a nice close-up shot of the damaged *moai* ear at Ahu Nau Nau.

Thanks, Jenny!



ENRIQUE TUCKI AND CONAF (Corporación Nacional Forestal) is pleased and proud to announce a new interpretive experience at the petroglyph of Papa Vaka and, with the assistance of some members of the EIF, Enrique produced a lovely and informative full-color fold-out brochure for visitors to the site. (See page 83 for a grayscale reproduction of the inner panel of the brochure.) Park Administrator Enrique tells us that he and CONAF are busy preparing another interpretive experience and brochure for the Papa Tataku Poki petroglyph site (adjacent to Ahu Tongariki). Not only will this brochure provide more information for visitors but it should help in the never-ending quest to preserve the fragile cultural heritage of Easter Island. Our *pukao*'s off to Enrique and CONAF!

#### WHAT'S NEW IN THE PACIFIC

**SPACE JUNK FALLS HARMLESSLY IN SOUTH PACIFIC:** Cape Canaveral, Fla. – A refrigerator-sized piece of space junk fell harmlessly into the South Pacific last November, according to NASA. It was a tank full of ammonia coolant on the international space station that was no longer needed. Astronaut Clayton Anderson threw it overboard during a spacewalk in July 2007. Space station program manager Mike Suffredini said that the debris splashed down somewhere between Australia and New Zealand. The tank had served as a reserve supply of spare coolant at the space station since 2001.

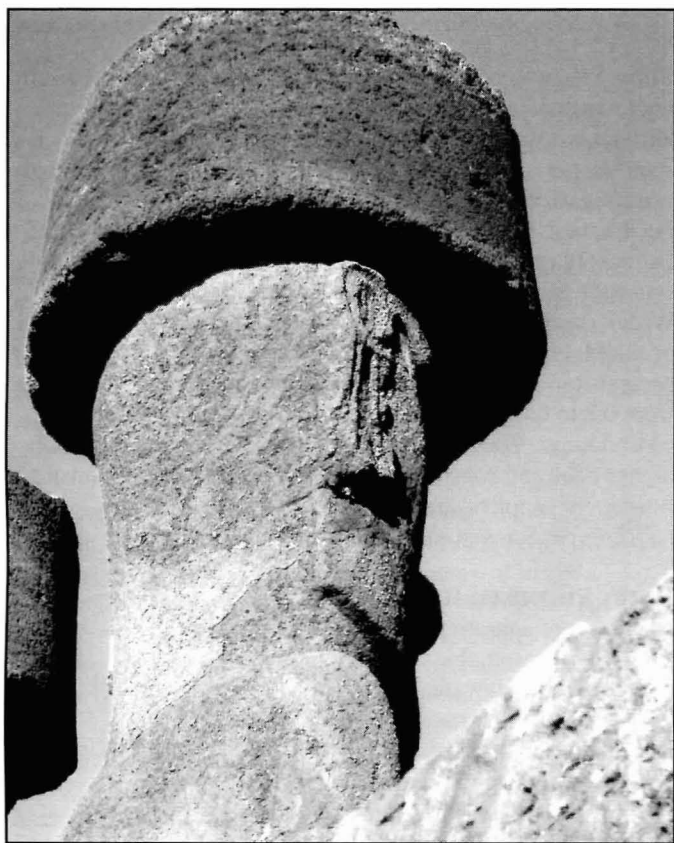
Source: *Yahoo! News* (November 3, 2008).

**NAN MADOL UNDER THREAT:** Rising sea levels are damaging one of the ancient world's greatest building projects — a series of artificial islands in Micronesia known as Nan Madol. According to University of Oregon archaeologist William Ayres, the residents of the island of Pohnpei first piled boulders on a barely submerged coral reef about 2,000 years ago, creating small islands for houses that, over the centuries, grew to include temples, tombs, royal residences, and homes for up to 1,000 persons. When the site was conquered and subsequently abandoned in the 1600s, it covered more than 120 acres. Since 1977, Ayres has seen pounding waves and increasingly powerful tides wash away the sand that stabilizes the islands. "Once the islands begin to deflate", he says, "the cultural remains shift, and you lose a lot of information".

Source: *Archaeology* (November/December 2008).

**MARSHALL ISLANDS FLOODED:** MAJURO - The Marshall Islands are in a state of emergency after severe flooding forced more than 600 persons from their homes. The *Marshall Islands Journal* reports that 5-foot waves and heavy storms swamped the cities of Majuro and Ebeye, destroying homes and sending residents into churches, high schools, and youth centers. About 1.5 feet of water submerged parts of the South Pacific islands. The state of emergency was declared Christmas Eve, after flooding that occurred from December 9 to December 15.

Source: *Arizona Republic* (December 26, 2008).



**ISLAND ABUNDANCE:** Even in what seems the middle of nowhere, scientists can — and do — find a breathtaking array of life. During a five-month survey on Vanuatu's island of Espiritu Santo, more than 150 botanists, marine zoologists, and other experts fanned out to scour mountains, forests, caves, reefs, and ocean for living organisms. The international team came up with more than 10,000 species, including crustaceans, insects, plants, and even a glow-in-the-dark fungus. Some 2,000 of these may be new to science. The discoveries will provide a benchmark for measuring future change in a little-known part of the world. Beyond this, "eighty percent of the world's species remain to be discovered", says French mollusk expert Philippe Bouchet, one of the expedition leaders. At a time when concern often focuses on what the world is losing, it's a reminder of all that's still to be found.

Source: *National Geographic* (December 2008).

**BUSH ESTABLISHES 3 U.S. MONUMENTS IN PACIFIC:** Parts of three remote and uninhabited Pacific island chains have been set aside as national monuments to protect them from oil and gas extraction and commercial fishing in what has been described as the largest marine conservation effort in history. The areas — totaling about 195,280 mi.<sup>2</sup> (506,000 km<sup>2</sup>) — include the Mariana Trench and the waters and corals surrounding three uninhabited islands in the Northern Mariana Islands, Rose Atoll in American Samoa, and seven islands strung along the equator in the central Pacific Ocean. Each location harbors unique species and some of the rarest geological formations on Earth — from the world's largest land crab to a bird that incubates its eggs in the heat of underwater volcanoes. All will be protected as national monuments — the same status afforded to statues and cultural sites — under the 1906 Antiquities Act. The law allows the government to immediately phase out commercial fishing and other extractive uses. However, recreational fishing, tourism and scientific research with a federal permit still could occur inside the three areas.

The protected areas will extend 50 nautical miles off the coral reefs and atolls at the three monuments, which will be officially called the Marianas Marine National Monument, Rose Atoll Marine National Monument, and the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument.

Source: *Arizona Republic* (January 6, 2009).

**JET USED TO IMPROVE CARBON DIOXIDE MEASURES:** Environmental scientist Steven Wofsy and his team will be traveling in a modified National Science Foundation jet airplane outfitted with equipment, technicians, and scientists who will make five flights around the world by 2011 as part of a \$4 million, three-year mission to collect samples of air (e.g., carbon dioxide) from different parts of the globe. During the first leg of the mission the crew will travel from Colorado to Montana to Alaska to new Zealand to America Samoa to the South Pole to Easter Island to Costa Rica and then back to Colorado. By collating data fed into computer models, the team hopes to develop a picture of where the CO<sub>2</sub> on the

planet is coming from and potentially contribute to a better understanding of global discussions about the environment.

Source: *Harvard Crimson* (January 11, 2009).

**WARSHIP LEAVES ON A ROUND-THE-WORLD CRUISE:** The *Cambrian* has left Auckland on a nine months' cruise round the world. She will go first to Rarotonga, in response to the requisitions made by the authorities there, in order to impress the natives of the Northern Islands, principally those of Rakahanga, who have lately been troublesome, and who, some months ago, hauled down the British flag. From there the *Cambrian* will go to Fanning Island, the Pacific cable station, and thence on to Honolulu.

After visiting various parts of the South American coast, the warship will go to Easter Island, of interest on account of its wonderful ruins and colossal images, then to Pitcairn Island, the home of nearly 200 of the descendants of the mutineers of the *Bounty*. This island is out of the track of sailing vessels and steamers, and is visited every few years by a British man-of-war, which generally takes to the inhabitants boxes of clothes and other comforts sent out by charitable people from Home.

The *Cambrian* goes from Pitcairn Island to Papeete, the French metropolis of the Eastern Pacific, and after that to Fiji. She returns to England thence by way of the Torres Straits, calling at several of the Dutch possessions, Batavia, and other places en route.

Source: *Otago Daily Times* (February 17, 2009).

**FIRST DROWNING VICTIMS OF GLOBAL WARMING?** According to an article in *Science News*, because the Maldives and Kiribati are among the lowest spots on Earth, they are in constant danger of becoming the first drowning victims of global warming. Compared to the canary in the coal mine in terms of the dramatic impact of climate change on the planet, Harvard University oceanographer James McCarthy says "They didn't cause the problem, but they will be among the first to feel it". With a combined population of nearly 400,000 persons, much of the Maldives and Kiribati is about 2 meters (6.5 feet) above present-day sea level. By 2100 sea level increases could range from 0.2 to 0.6 meters (0.7 to 2 feet), overtaking low-lying coastal areas. Warning signs are already appearing, including higher tides and coastal flooding, less rainfall and diminishing freshwater supplies, and bleaching of some coral reefs.

Source: *Science News* (February 28, 2009).

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY, HAWAII'!:** The last of the commemorative U.S. quarters has been released, this one marking the anniversary of Hawaiian statehood. The quarter features Hawaiian monarch King Kamehameha I stretching his hand toward the eight major Hawaiian Islands. Inscriptions are the state motto "Ua Mau Ke Ea O Ka 'Aina I Ka Pono" ("The Life of the Land is Perpetuated in Righteousness"), "Hawaii", and "1959". And for you



philatelists out there, Hawai'i is also being featured on a stamp from the U.S. Post Office.



**THE LATEST BUZZ ON MOSQUITOES:** Australian and Chinese researchers have found a way to shorten the lifespan of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, vector for such nasty things like Dengue Fever. By infecting the mosquito with the *Wolbachia* bacteria, the mosquitoes die before they can infect a new human host. Bravo to the School of Integrative Biology, University of Queensland and the College of Life Sciences, Central China Normal University!

Source: *Science* 323:141-144 (2009).

## WHAT'S NEW ELSEWHERE

**THE HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION** has released a 9-part TV documentary series exploring cultures and stories from around the Pacific. Three of the documentaries, each of which is about 10 minutes in length, are about Easter Island. All were posted online after their broadcast premier. Direct your Internet browser to <<http://www.teleschool.k12.hi.us/>> and scroll down to "View Episodes of Pacific Clues:" where you'll find, among other programs on Pacific archaeology, Hawai'i, whales and whaling, and Pohnpei, "Rapa Nui - Ecological Disaster, What Happened?"; "Rapa Nui - Mapping the Moai"; and "Rapa Nui - Moai on the Move".

Source: *Honolulu Advertiser* (November 4, 2008)

**EASTER ISLAND CARVINGS IN THE NEWS:** According to an article in *ArtDaily.org*, part of an African and Oceanic art auction consisting of the collection of Frieda & Milton Rosenthal included a *moai kavakava*. Estimated to go for between \$250,000 and \$350,000, it sold for \$614,500 — a record for an Easter Island sculpture at auction.

Source: *ArtDaily.org* (November 18, 2008)

**ACCORDING TO A REUTERS NEWS REPORT**, the wreck of a Spanish slave ship that once carried an illegal cargo of African slaves (believed to be the ancestors of many of today's inhabitants of the British colony of Turks & Caicos) once had on board two *moai kava kava* carvings. The ship, known as the *Trouvadore*, carried 193 African captives eight years after Britain had abolished its slave trade and sank in 1841 after hitting a reef south of the Bahamas. A letter in the Smithsonian Institution dated 1872 mentioned what were once thought to be African idols but were apparently later identified as to their Easter Island origin and finally ended up in the Museum of Natural History in New York.

Source: *Yahoo! News* (November 26, 2008).

**VOYAGE OF TAI KAHANO, CANOE OF THE MARQUESAS ISLANDS** - Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle de La Rochelle, 28 rue Albert ler - January 10 to June 28, 2009.

The result of a collaboration between ethno-archaeologist Helene Guiot and Marquesan sculptor Jean Huukena, this traveling exhibition (which will eventually return to Nuka Hiva for the Festival of the Marquesas Islands in 2011) explores the techniques of Marquesan ocean navigation, including history, artistry, technical training, and design.

For more information, visit <[www.museum-larochelle.fr](http://www.museum-larochelle.fr)>

## HELP THE KON-TIKI MUSEUM

If you have any Tiki memorabilia you could consider lending to the Kon-Tiki Museum in Oslo, Norway, you might be part of next Summer's exhibition at the Museum, from May 24th to September 30th 2009. On October 6 Thor Heyerdahl would have turned 94. His world-famous expeditions, which attempted to show that people had used the world's oceans as important means of communication as early as many thousands of years ago, thrilled an entire world and irritated many researchers. The Kon-Tiki Expedition is probably the best known of these in the four corners of the world. The book about the expedition has been translated into more than 70 languages over the years, thanks in large part to the film of the expedition winning an Oscar in 1951. A less discussed result of the Kon-Tiki Expedition was the so-called Tiki trend. The Tiki trend took off when American soldiers arrived home from the Pacific Ocean and brought with them souvenirs and tastes from Hawai'i and other islands in the region. Tiki bars serving drinks that used pineapple and rum as the main ingredients were especially popular, as were Tiki restaurants that served food and had interiors inspired by the southern ocean. The Kon-Tiki expedition and the popularity the book and film attained helped to spread the Tiki phenomenon in America and to other countries. When Heyerdahl later visited Easter Island, his film and book, *Aku-Aku*, helped to re-vitalize this sub-culture. This also spread to Norway where for many years the Kon-Tiki restaurant in Sjølyst, Oslo, presented this culture and where in more recent times the Aku Aku bar in Grünerløkka, Oslo, has picked up the baton from the 1940s and 1960s and run with it. The Tiki Effect Exhibition at the Kon-Tiki Museum in the Summer of 2009 will show how this phenomenon arose and spread.

The Kon-Tiki Museum would like to borrow memorabilia and contributors to the exhibition will be invited to its opening along with friends and family. Memorabilia could be anything from menus to cocktail sticks and matchboxes from the Kon-Tiki restaurant on Sjølyst, or from other Tiki bars and restaurants from around the world. They could be models of the Kon-Tiki raft you made when you were a child. Perhaps you have cinema posters or advertising posters for the *Kon-Tiki* book or film, or one of the many objects, drinks, or sweets that over the years bore the Kon-Tiki name? If you have something you think the museum may be interested in, please contact: Reidar Solsvik at the Kon-Tiki Museum (phone: +47-23-08-67-76; e-mail: [reidar.solsvik@kon-tiki.no](mailto:reidar.solsvik@kon-tiki.no)).

Source: *The Norway Post* (January 31, 2009).